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Civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Countries emerging from conflict typically confront a wide range of urgent demands to build and sustain peace, yet they often face a critical shortage of capacity to meet priority needs quickly and effectively. The international community has recognized this challenge, and many bilateral and multilateral actors have taken steps to improve support to conflict-affected countries. These individual efforts, however, have fallen short of a establishing a reliable and effective mechanism to provide countries with the assistance that they seek. The United Nations still struggles to recruit and deploy civilian expertise and to support national actors in expanding and deepening their skills. In March 2010, I appointed a Senior Advisory Group, chaired by former Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, to undertake an independent review of civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict with a view to providing concrete and practical proposals to strengthen civilian support for sustainable peace and development.

The report of the Senior Advisory Group (A/65/747-S/2011/85) was presented to Member States in February 2011. It is a wide-ranging report that makes a number of recommendations relevant to Member States, to regional and civil society organizations and to the United Nations. Recognizing the scope of the report, I established a Steering Committee, chaired by Susana Malcorra, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, to lead a coordinated follow-up to the report.

The present report is the first response of the United Nations to the independent review on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict. Its starting point is the current United Nations system and the procedures and practices that fall within my purview as Secretary-General to strengthen the support provided by the Organization

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to countries emerging from conflict. Putting our own house in order is a prerequisite for effective engagement with Member States, regional organizations, civil society partners and, above all, the countries seeking our assistance. This alone, however, is not enough to improve international civilian support. We all have an obligation to review our respective individual efforts, as well as our partnerships, in support of communities and people who have endured violence and deprivation. In subsequent phases I shall focus on the role that others must play and the partnerships that we must put in place to enable us to collectively strengthen the quality and efficiency of civilian support after conflict.

The present report identifies a set of concrete priority actions and timelines for the United Nations over the course of the next 12 months aimed at improving its civilian response and becoming a better partner for others. These include:

(a) Developing guidelines for better use and development of national capacity, as well as guidance to ensure that procurement practices do not exclude local suppliers;

(b) Giving stronger strategic direction to new planning processes;

(c) Undertaking a review of how gender expertise is structured and deployed;

(d) Consulting Member States and regional organizations on developing stronger partnerships, to ensure we make the best possible use of their capabilities;

(e) Establishing an online platform to broadcast civilian needs and available capacities and better connect Governments, the United Nations and external capacity providers;

(f) Exploring modalities to broaden the scope for deploying personnel provided by Governments or other entities;

(g) Detailing critical capacity gap areas and ensuring that designated United Nations focal points engage with external partners to address them;

(h) Pursuing a corporate emergency model in the United Nations Secretariat to enable an effective response to situations where rapid deployment is required;

(i) Ensuring that United Nations leaders in the field exercise the operational and financial agility entrusted to them to fulfil their mandates;

(j) Applying the principle of comparative advantage in discharging mandates;

(k) Piloting these approaches in the field, for example mobilizing national and regional expertise and examining the scope for local procurement in South Sudan.

Above all, the present report makes clear that a sustainable peace is a national peace. Externally imposed solutions or skills cannot replace ownership by, and capacity of, national communities, their leaders and their institutions. That starting point must be our end goal.

I. Introduction

1. National efforts to build and consolidate peace after conflict need to be supported by timely, effective civilian capacities. As I emphasized in my report on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict (A/63/881-S/2009/304), we must seize the window of opportunity often offered in the post-conflict period to provide basic security, deliver peace dividends, build confidence in political processes, strengthen national capacity to lead peacebuilding and lay the foundations for sustainable development.

2. To meet this challenge, the international community, especially the United Nations, needs to deliver the requisite specialized civilian capacities more quickly and effectively, i.e. the skills and expertise needed to support national actors as they seek to re-establish the rule of law, revitalize the economy, restore basic services to the population and develop the capacities to make these gains sustainable. The risk of relapse in the early years of peace is high. Instability and conflict spill over borders and destabilize neighbouring countries. There are strong linkages between security, peace and development; countries affected by conflict are the furthest away from achieving the Millennium Development Goals. For sustainable peace and development, we need to invest in the right civilian capacities early on.

3. It was in response to these imperatives that I initiated a review to analyse how to broaden and deepen the pool of civilian expertise to support the immediate capacity-development needs of countries emerging from conflict. In March 2010, I appointed a Senior Advisory Group, chaired by former Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, to carry out an independent review. The Group consulted entities across the United Nations system, at Headquarters and in the field, Member States, the Peacebuilding Commission, regional organizations, civil society and academia. I submitted its report (A/65/747-S/2011/85) to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council on 22 February 2011. I subsequently appointed a Steering Committee, with members representing entities from across the United Nations system, to consider how the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group should be taken forward.

4. The report of the Senior Advisory Group is founded on certain key principles: that stronger civilian capacities are vital to building lasting peace; that latent national capacities in conflict-affected countries must be nurtured; that international support must respond to demand, not be driven by supply; and that the United Nations needs to be more responsive, flexible and cost-effective in providing that support. I have been encouraged by the widespread support Member States have expressed for these principles, for the emphasis in the report on a demand-driven approach and field focus and for many of its recommendations.

5. I share the assessment of the Senior Advisory Group that to meet these challenges we need to build stronger partnerships with external partners; broaden the supply of specialized capacities by better identifying and deploying those available, especially in the global South and among women; develop more effective ways of working together across the United Nations system; and develop a management culture and business practices that enable my senior leaders to respond swiftly and effectively to changing realities in the field. The emphasis placed by the Senior Advisory Group on achieving these goals while making better use of systems

already in place, is in line with the approach I have charted to build a more accountable, transparent, efficient and effective United Nations.

6. In my second term I intend to prioritize measures that will make the United Nations more effective and efficient, including through my change management programme. A key feature will be the implementation of the present report on civilian capacity. Many existing United Nations initiatives (such as my agenda for action on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict, the global field support strategy, the strategic framework on women, peace and security, our system-wide coherence efforts and my forthcoming report on preventive diplomacy) have the potential to improve the deployment of civilian capacities, even if that is not their primary objective. So do initiatives developed with partners, such as the World Bank *World Development Report 2011*, the United Nations-European Commission partnership on natural resources, conflict and peacebuilding, and the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding.

7. In the present report I set out how the United Nations should respond to the report of the Senior Advisory Group: what action the United Nations itself should take to improve the quality, speed and effectiveness of civilian support to conflict-affected countries and what it should do in partnership with others. I set out a road map for action along three major axes: developing greater national capacity and ownership in our post-conflict response; building the external partnerships and making the necessary adjustments within the United Nations system to source the civilian capacities required; and exercising the organizational agility necessary to respond nimbly to unpredictable post-conflict situations.

8. I envisage our response falling into different categories. First are the priorities for early implementation: those initiatives falling within my own authority or that of the executive heads of United Nations entities which offer the greatest potential for impact on the ground. I set out in the present report how I intend to pursue these in the short term. Next are ideas that require more careful reflection before being taken forward. Some of these fall within the purview of the United Nations system, others are for Member States or other stakeholders to consider; I intend to revert to Member States on these ideas in more detail at a later date. Last are issues which are already being addressed in other reform processes within the United Nations. Most of these should continue to be dealt within those processes, while highlighting their relevance to civilian capacities.

9. Much of my agenda will be applicable across the various responses of the United Nations in the aftermath of conflict. Where humanitarian needs persist in parallel with the beginning of recovery and development programming, humanitarian action will continue to be guided by the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

II. National capacity

10. As communities emerge from conflict they often face a critical shortage of capacities to secure sustainable peace. As I stressed in my reports on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict and on women's participation in peacebuilding (A/65/354-S/2010/466) and as the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission have emphasized, identifying, developing and using national capacities must be a priority in the aftermath of conflict. This will help to

develop the national ownership that is essential to achieving sustainable peace and development.

11. This is not a technical exercise. Supporting post-conflict national institutions is a high-risk, political undertaking. It extends beyond Governments into civil society and the private sector and beyond national institutions to subnational, local and community levels. There are tensions between the imperatives of starting to build national capacity from day one and delivering early peace dividends like basic services.

12. Nevertheless, capacity-development is a process that must begin from the earliest days of international involvement, a challenge to be addressed by the United Nations and all international actors. It must include capacity assessment, capacity-building, including through targeted training and mentoring, capacity utilization, and capacity sustainability. While there are many examples of the United Nations developing and using national capacity, a more systematic approach is needed. Within the United Nations, I have asked the inter-agency working group on capacity-development, chaired by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to develop, by 2012, core principles and guidelines for better using and developing national capacity in post-conflict contexts, as well as plans for developing concrete tools to equip field teams to conduct capacity assessments, design strategies and monitor results. These tools should include strategies to target specific constituencies, including women and young people.

13. One important aspect to be considered is the need to avoid any negative impact on national capacity-development, for example the brain drain of local capacity to international and bilateral organizations. In order to foster coherence among international efforts, the United Nations will work with the World Bank and maintain a dialogue with interested Member States. We can only succeed if all major international actors work together to develop national capacity.

14. Equally important in strategies for capacity-development is to pay more attention to the subnational level, where results are often more visible and important to people and can catalyse capacity-development efforts at the national level. This is vital in transitions, where the inability of a State to deliver on core functions can undermine its legitimacy and credibility and put peace consolidation at risk.

15. While we must aim to maximize the use of national capacity from the outset, in some cases international capacity is needed to provide the requisite technical expertise. In other cases, international capacity may be necessary to ensure impartiality, neutrality or security, or where a protracted conflict has weakened systems of accountability and transparency to the point where temporary substitution measures are needed to restore confidence. Such measures should be one element of a broader strategy, with benchmarks set for their duration and a realistic exit strategy clearly defined.[1] Such strategies must take into account the need for proper balance and sequencing of the use of international assistance and national (even if still weak) capacities in order to further the goal of strengthening national legitimacy, ownership and long-term sustainability. Direct international support and capacity-development must take place in parallel to prevent long-term dependency on international resources.

[1] The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is developing capacity-development strategies to inform their programmes in South Sudan, with an emphasis on outcomes and exit strategies.

16. One of the ways in which United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions can contribute to building capacity is by training national staff. For example, a capacity-building project launched in 2010 by the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste is training over 900 national staff, using local and regional training providers where possible. Such efforts should be guided by national requirements[2] and built into early mission planning. The use of National Professional Officers increases the opportunities for national staff to contribute to the work of field missions and to build their capacities in critical peacebuilding and State-building functions.[3] The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, UNDP and other United Nations entities are collaborating to mobilize national expertise for South Sudan, including from the diaspora where appropriate, for example through job fairs in neighbouring countries and a national United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme. Such initiatives are equally important in non-mission countries, where efforts to build national capacities to manage conflict[4] are an important part of sustainable peacebuilding. I urge Member States to support these initiatives by funding return and reintegration for nationals and programmes that foster national staff development.

17. Capacity-development needs to be built into planning from the start. Recent innovations such as the post-conflict needs assessment, the strategic assessment, the integrated strategic framework and the revised guidelines for United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks have done much to improve integrated United Nations planning. But we still have further to go. Early planning must include a strong field perspective, with United Nations staff already in country working with national stakeholders to assess national priorities and existing national capacity,[5] including in the diaspora. This will help to ensure that planning is driven by national priorities and needs and not by the availability of international staff or other resources, and that it explores the opportunities to use and develop latent national capacity. Plans need to be flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances and an increasing degree of national ownership. The Integration Steering Group has decided that the integrated mission planning process guidelines will be revised by 2012. This will include reflecting the importance of engaging national actors in the assessment, planning, and implementation phases. Clear strategic guidance will be provided on how to ensure that national perspectives and capacities are taken into account from the outset of each planning process.

18. Strategies for capacity-development should pay special attention to the needs and capacities of women. As my report on women's participation in peacebuilding emphasized, post-conflict transition is a critical moment for reassessing gender roles and capacities and taking steps towards gender equality. Work is under way to integrate gender equality principles into United Nations post-conflict planning. United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks periodically undergo retrospective gender reviews and gender mainstreaming guidance has been developed for post-conflict needs assessments.

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[2] Training for national staff is a joint priority of the Government of Timor-Leste and the United Nations Integrated Mission. Mission training courses and facilities are open to staff in government ministries and other national institutions, as far as resources allow.

[3] As in the case of the new mission in South Sudan.

[4] Such as the Ghana peace infrastructure supported by the Department of Political Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme.

[5] See A/63/881-S/2009/304, para. 46.

19. However, while guidelines can be important tools, they do not appear to be effective in ensuring that women's needs are addressed, or that women are included in post-conflict planning and programme implementation. The factors that do make a difference are committed and convinced leadership, the early engagement of gender experts (particularly with sector-specific skills) and effective accountability frameworks. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) will undertake by mid-2012 a rapid and cost-effective review of the way gender expertise is structured and deployed in post-conflict situations, with recommendations for increasing its effectiveness. In addition, I call on my senior leaders to ensure that United Nations planning frameworks integrate targets and indicators from the system-wide strategic framework based on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) to better support the participation of women in peacebuilding.

20. Since 2009, the United Nations has been working with Member States to encourage more women to join their national police services and to nominate more women for international deployment as part of the global effort to increase the share of women in United Nations police components to 20 per cent by 2014.

21. Support for core government functions is vital for reinforcing national ownership. The priorities that the Senior Advisory Group singled out were policy management and prioritization, aid coordination and public financial management. The *World Development Report 2011* pointed to the importance of effective institutions for citizen security, justice and jobs. The preliminary results of the lessons-learned review of public administration in post-conflict contexts add civil service personnel management and local government capacities. Civil service management should include measures to attract and retain personnel, including through a variety of incentives.

22. Strengthening core government functions requires more than stronger technical capacities, however. Public administration and governance are legitimized not only by the way in which the State delivers technically, but also through its interaction with society: the way decisions are made, how public goods and resources are allocated and how populations can engage with the State. Building confidence between States and populations through participation in decision-making and delivery of peace dividends is crucial to avoid the recurrence of conflict. Early international engagement must focus on strengthening capacities for building State-society relations. Sufficient funding from Member States is essential to enable an effective and predictable United Nations response in these areas.

23. In its report, the Senior Advisory Group recommends that, where appropriate, international personnel in post-conflict settings should be physically co-located within national institutions. We have experience of this in many post-conflict settings and we are examining the options for co-location of civilian staff with Government personnel in the new mission in South Sudan.[6] In assessing whether co-location is appropriate and when, the degree of absorption capacity of national institutions should be considered, as should the need to safeguard the impartiality of international assistance,[7] effective human rights monitoring and reporting, the

[6] See Security Council resolution 1996 (2011), para. 22.

[7] This is particularly important for the humanitarian agencies that base their response on the principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence, which in some cases may make co-location inappropriate.

security of staff and whether international staff are responsible for mentoring and knowledge transfer or for providing technical expertise. The inter-agency working group on capacity-development should include in its guidelines advice on co-location, building on past experience.[8]

24. United Nations procurement may involve opportunities to expand the positive economic impact of United Nations field presences. Local procurement is already substantial in some post-conflict countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia. Business seminars are conducted in those countries to inform local markets of the procurement requirements of the United Nations. I request field missions to make every effort to include local suppliers in procurement solicitations issued by the United Nations. Beginning in 2012, I will request peacekeeping operations periodically to provide information on their local economic impact and their contribution to local economies.

25. As for the agencies, funds and programmes, the World Food Programme (WFP) has a procurement programme that seeks to stimulate the agricultural sector by purchasing from small farmers;[9] the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) procures an increasingly large proportion of supplies on the local market; and UNDP purchases local goods and services through streamlined bidding processes. Conflict-sensitive local procurement in the humanitarian phase can help establish partnerships that can be leveraged during post-conflict recovery.

26. Much more can be accomplished within the existing regulatory framework for procurement without compromising transparency, international competition and quality standards. The Department of Management will issue guidance so that procurement practices do not exclude local suppliers, so that as far as possible requisitions can be unbundled to make them more accessible to local providers, including microenterprises, and so that financial criteria for eligible vendors can be reviewed to enable small companies to compete. We are examining the scope for local procurement in South Sudan. One possibility is for non-governmental organizations to support small companies to bid for contracts for maintenance and support services,[10] or help to establish small companies, where they do not exist.

27. I have asked the Department of Management to review existing United Nations procurement processes and procedures in 2012, to analyse selected country situations to identify obstacles to greater local procurement and whether these can be addressed within existing procedures, to assess recent innovations and to recommend revisions accordingly.[11] I support similar innovations in the agencies, funds and programmes.

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[8] For instance, UNICEF efforts to transfer knowledge and skills in the health sector in Afghanistan and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) support to aid management in Nepal and to the electoral commission in Liberia.

[9] Through the Purchase for Progress initiative, the World Food Programme has purchased maize in South Sudan to supply food for displaced Congolese and Central African refugees in South Sudan.

[10] As, for example, the Peace Dividend Trust has done in Timor-Leste and Afghanistan.

[11] The political impact of buying locally must also be considered. If greater local procurement tends to concentrate wealth among the powerful few, it may inadvertently increase inequality and tensions in a post-conflict society.

III. International civilian capacities

28. The recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group for more effective mobilization of international civilian capacities can be seen as three concentric circles: better leveraging of external capacity through partnerships with non-United Nations entities; enhanced capacity and interoperability across the United Nations; and change within the Secretariat. The area of external partnerships offers particular scope for innovative approaches that can deliver greater responsiveness on the ground.

A. Leveraging external capacity: partnerships with non-United Nations entities

29. The large number of United Nations interventions in conflict-affected countries and the breadth and complexity of their mandates, require more and increasingly specialized civilian capacities. These include "niche" functions (for example, public-private partnerships or specialized rule of law tasks like investigative expertise), as well as expertise that may be unique to a country or region, such as traditional justice or anti-piracy expertise. To find this expertise and fill current gaps, the United Nations needs to explore a greater variety of sources of capacity, particularly among actors from the global South, and to build effective partnerships with potential providers.

30. Building these partnerships will be a priority for my second term. In so doing I will be guided by certain principles. First, accessibility and inclusiveness: new partnership opportunities must be visible and accessible to all potential partners, from all regions. This should include countries with recent experience of change or transition, which offer a growing pool of relevant experience to draw upon.[12] This approach should also enable us to identify and access more capacities among women.

31. Second, to meet the needs of conflict-affected countries, we need a more broadly composed workforce in which core United Nations staff are supplemented by additional capacities deployed on a flexible, on-demand basis from Governments, international and regional organizations and non-governmental entities. This approach, already applied by United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and by some parts of the Secretariat, should align the composition of our workforce more closely with operational requirements. It will also offer Member States increased opportunities to provide civilian capacities in partnership with the United Nations. We will consult Member States to ensure that we make the best use possible of the capabilities of different countries and regions. I encourage Member States and regional organizations to participate actively in these consultations.

32. Within this broad policy framework, we are beginning work on the instruments and modalities that will be needed to support more effective deployment through external partners. As a first step, I intend to pilot tools to link demand and supply,

[12] For example, Indonesian expertise on mediation; the experience of Latin American countries in dealing with urban and criminal violence; Bangladeshi experience in promoting the empowerment of women in areas such as microcredit and community health; and South African electoral and mediation expertise in Burundi.

which can be developed progressively in the light of experience. Work has begun on developing a "virtual marketplace" of civilian capacity, an online platform where needs and capacities can be broadcast, helping Governments and the United Nations system to find potential suppliers of the capacities they need and to better connect the United Nations in the field to external capacity providers. The platform will offer information about standardized partnership modalities, so that the United Nations can rapidly access the capacities of partners without reinventing the process every time. It will also begin to publicize existing rosters — both those within the United Nations system and those managed by external providers — and enhance their efficiency by enabling roster managers to communicate with each other, as well as to understand better what experience and skills are currently most in demand.

33. The goal of better connecting with external partners is a complex and important undertaking which will not be fulfilled through a platform alone. To ensure that we make early progress towards this priority goal, we are setting up a small team, initially from within existing resources, to identify the main challenges to be addressed in implementation. The team will develop the necessary partnership modalities, create standardized legal arrangements to make long-term partnerships more fruitful and foster greater South-South and triangular cooperation, engaging closely in dialogue with Member States on the evolving demands and sources of capacity described below.

34. Modalities to enable partners to work together easily, freely available to all potential partners and operating within a clear policy framework, are essential to broadening the scope for deploying personnel provided by Governments or other entities, whether as individuals or as groups. The United Nations already has long-standing, efficient modalities (such as letters of assist and memorandums of understanding) that govern the deployment of military and police personnel and the provision of specialist logistics support from Member States to peacekeeping operations, as well as memorandums of understanding for the provision of standby personnel for humanitarian purposes.[13] The Department of Management will take the lead in developing ways to extend these to civilian deployment, including in situations where groups of specialized personnel are needed for specific initiatives, or where regional expertise is required and building on lessons learned in the agencies, funds and programmes in arranging such deployments with non-United Nations partners, including with regard to quality control and accountability issues.

35. In addition, there may be ways beyond the existing modalities to broaden the scope for deploying personnel provided by Governments or other entities. Once we have clarified what is possible when the Secretariat makes full use of its existing authority, I may revert to the General Assembly in 2012 with proposals to update the relevant policies.

36. I encourage Member States and established rosters and training centres to invest more in developing capacity in the global South. Many existing rosters already include members from North and South. While some civilian capacity partnerships may be supported from mission or agency budgets, other financing options, including trust funds, should be explored. Better communication between

[13] Such as the pool of experts the United Nations Office for Project Services can call on for its mine action services.

southern providers and the United Nations in the field can help identify new opportunities for South-South cooperation, including in areas where southern Governments may themselves have already faced and addressed similar challenges.[14] Partnering with centres of excellence or civil society organizations, especially those in the South, offers an entry point for tapping such capacities.[15]

37. I also encourage Member States to explore opportunities for triangular cooperation, such as for example the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) initiative for capacity enhancement in South Sudan, supported by UNDP and Norway, under which the Government of South Sudan will place 200 civil servants from IGAD member States in key functions in South Sudan for two years. This project is also an example of South-South cooperation, as the countries sending their civil servants to South Sudan will continue to pay their salaries.

38. I encourage my senior leaders in the field to make greater use of United Nations Volunteers — 80 per cent of whom originate from the global South — in national capacity-building, especially at the local public administration and community levels, and to include them in early mission planning, particularly in integrated operations where UNV is working with UNDP and other United Nations partners in national institution-building as, for instance, in South Sudan. The Secretariat will work with UNV to implement the recommendations of the recent Department of Field Support-UNV partnership evaluation by, for example, placing greater emphasis on capacity-building for national staff and the use of national United Nations volunteers and more strategic deployment of those volunteers during periods of peace and development and the transition to United Nations country teams and political missions. In 2012, the Department of Field Support, the Department of Political Affairs and UNV will conduct a follow-on review to investigate why United Nations volunteers have been underutilized in political missions and to propose how to improve this engagement.

B. System-wide capacity and interoperability

39. Many United Nations entities across the system are involved in providing the range of civilian capacities required in complex post-conflict environments. National partners, whose resources are usually severely depleted, need to find the United Nations strategically and operationally coherent, notwithstanding the separate character, governance structures, mandate and source of financing of its different entities.

40. As the Senior Advisory Group observed, recruitment and appointment systems vary greatly across the United Nations. A United Nations entity cannot easily deploy personnel from another part of the system. In addition, most agencies, funds and programmes maintain their own rosters of specialized civilian experts to be deployed in a crisis. However, they are set up differently and are not easily interoperable. Since field operations demand a wide variety of expertise, much of

[14] Such as Brazilian economic revitalization projects in Angola, or South Africa's partnership with Germany to support legal and judicial training in South Sudan.

[15] For example, the Brazilian non-governmental organization Igarapé is developing a roster of civilian experts to deploy to peace operations, with the support of the Governments of Brazil, Canada and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

which will be found throughout the wider United Nations system, the rosters throughout the system should be shared resources.

41. The civilian capacities online platform described above will be a first step towards greater system-wide collaboration. Establishing real interoperability, however, will be a more complex exercise. The Department of Management is leading an inter-agency group to define what measures would be required, including an inventory of existing rosters and related training, minimum standards for roster participants, gap identification and analysis of options (including the development of a joint or shared roster, cost sharing and administrative modalities for rapid release). Working with the Human Resources Network, the group will report on options by 2012.

42. Work is separately under way in the Department of Management to expand to the agencies, funds and programmes the staff exchange system (the Voluntary Initiative for Network Exchange) that currently operates in the Secretariat. I am committed to removing obstacles that hinder staff from one United Nations entity being deployed or recruited by another; mobility will remain a priority in my second term.

C. Within the United Nations Secretariat

43. United Nations missions and field operations are planned and staffed, and much civilian capacity is recruited and deployed, from among Secretariat staff. The tendency to try to find all the necessary capacities among Secretariat staff or through direct recruitment to the Secretariat means that we often fail to deliver the right civilian capacities quickly enough.

44. At the same time, strengthening our external partnerships and accessing more resources from across the United Nations system is not a substitute for improving the way we recruit and manage staffing in the Secretariat. Fundamental to improving this is the need to move away from using a single process to fulfil different human resources management needs for recruitment, promotion and assignment.

45. The Senior Advisory Group makes several useful proposals for measures to improve the ability of the United Nations to staff its missions. While some of these require further consideration, several of them, including mobility, staff welfare and performance management, are already being considered by the General Assembly or pursued in other reform processes. I believe that these are most effectively addressed under those existing initiatives. Some, such as staff welfare and mobility, have implications for the wider United Nations system.

46. I intend to pursue the recommendations for a corporate emergency model separately[16] (which will require defining the terms of such a model, including who may declare an emergency; developing a system for lateral moves of staff across the United Nations system; and developing a fast-track recruitment mechanism) and establishing a roster of rapidly deployable Secretariat staff who have undergone standardized training, including in management, human rights and gender issues.

[16] Drawing on the experience of the humanitarian crisis response models, including those established by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP, UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund.

47. The Senior Advisory Group recommends that clear and transparent processes be developed to manage mission start-ups and transitions. This is being addressed by initiatives such as the elaboration and extension of the global field support strategy, the ongoing review of the integrated missions planning process and preparatory work for my forthcoming report on funding, backstopping and support to special political missions.

IV. Expertise and accountability

A. Leadership and accountability

48. The report of the Senior Advisory Group includes recommendations to strengthen the capacity and accountability of senior United Nations leaders. I intend to build on existing initiatives to select leaders based on competence, to examine ways to conduct a more rigorous review of the track record of potential leaders, including on gender mainstreaming, and to use innovative and appropriate methods of assessment. I will also explore other initiatives aimed at ensuring the integrity of senior appointment processes, such as increasing the number of senior posts advertised. I will continue to require that women are included in all phases of the recruitment process and will encourage the conduct of interviews for senior-level positions.

49. In terms of improving the capacity of senior leaders to manage the United Nations response to conflict, we will explore ways in which training for leaders can be improved within existing resources. These include an increased focus on administrative and support issues in training for senior leaders, including sessions with their head of administration during induction; providing online advice to leaders, incorporating lessons learned from audit recommendations and the justice system; including staff development programmes in conference schedules to maximize opportunities for group learning; and ensuring leaders devote five days per year to training.[17] The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs will continue to develop a methodology for missions to deliver scenario-based exercises targeting decision-making and crisis management.

50. I strongly share the view of the Senior Advisory Group that senior leaders should be held accountable for results to national actors and populations, as well as to the United Nations. Expected results should be defined on the basis of agreed goals. Accountability should extend beyond results to service provision and working with other parts of the United Nations system. Moreover, there should be a degree of shared accountability for the delivery of results between senior staff from across the United Nations system.

51. Strengthened oversight and accountability for results must, however, be seen in the context of complex post-conflict situations. Achieving results in such situations will often require taking a calculated degree of risk. Senior leaders should be empowered, not constrained, from taking measured risks.

[17] An example of current efforts to improve training for senior leaders is the 5-8 day mission-specific training programme being developed by the Department for Peacekeeping Operations for heads of military components.

52. I have asked the Department of Management to work with UN-Women to review and enhance the systems in place to uphold accountability for gender equality in the immediate aftermath of conflict, including accountability for the implementation of my seven-point action plan on women's participation in peacebuilding. Systems will include regular audits of progress against agreed criteria, such as the indicators in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and senior staff performance assessments. I will return to the General Assembly in 2012 with a further proposal for accountability for gender equality in post-conflict contexts.

B. Accountability and responsibility

53. I agree with the Senior Advisory Group that there are critical gaps in the provision of global civilian capacities and that we need to create mechanisms that can help fill these gaps, enhance accountability and reinforce substantive leadership. The Senior Advisory Group recommended establishing a cluster system and designated leads for core areas of peacebuilding activity. I support the underlying objective of the Group to deliver more effective, accountable and predictable international assistance in the aftermath of conflict. Capacity gaps represent not only structural deficits in international assistance but also urgent needs for countries with different contexts, in both mission and non-mission settings. Our aim must be to ensure that core areas are covered with access to sufficient deployable capacities, adequately funded and that there is no duplication. This is necessary to ensure that conflict-affected countries receive the support they need, but also to make the provision of support more efficient.

54. The consideration of what the United Nations system needs to do to strengthen core capacities cannot be separated from the issue of broader international capacities. A sustained dialogue is needed with Member States and the international financial institutions on the evolving demands for and sources of capacity. As a starting point, I have asked the Chair of the Steering Committee to consult Member States and other providers of civilian capacity to detail the demand for and sources of capacity in the priority areas identified by the Senior Advisory Group,[18] focusing on the most urgent operational needs (such as security, police and criminal justice sector reform) and building on the capacity mapping done by the Senior Advisory Group. Within these broad areas, more work is needed to pinpoint the critical capacity gaps, some of which are highly specialized functions. The needs and emerging lessons from immediate country situations, such as South Sudan, should help to illustrate what the gaps are and how they might best be filled. Dialogue with Member States and other key actors will also help to map civilian capacity and track long-term commitment to filling the gaps. It will inform and energize our efforts at clarifying responsibility and accountability for core peacebuilding areas.

55. Within the United Nations, I am committed to establishing a more practical, flexible approach to this challenge, based on the following elements:

(a) Within the United Nations system, a focal point is needed at Headquarters for each specific area, responsible for knowing where capacities and gaps exist;

[18] Basic safety and security, justice, inclusive political processes, core government functionality and economic revitalization.

(b) The role of the focal point will differ across areas, in the light of capacities and context;

(c) In addition to understanding global and country-specific capacities, the focal point for a particular area should identify existing knowledge products, help fill knowledge gaps and share best practices and lessons learned. The focal point will be responsible for ensuring that information on relevant commitments, along with the provision of technical assistance for gender mainstreaming and women's participation, is provided to country partners, in coordination with UN-Women;

(d) Focal points can provide an entry point into the United Nations system for field leaders seeking capacity, as well for Member States, service providers and other partners, thus helping formal and informal networks and exchange of information to flourish in each area;

(e) Arrangements for responsibility and accountability to provide capacity in each core area of expertise need to be tailored to the particular area and driven by needs in the field. While there is a need for predictable and deployable capacities in core areas, arrangements will differ from country to country within the same core area depending on comparative advantage;

(f) Arrangements in specific country situations need to be clear to all. They should be addressed in early planning, taking into account global arrangements and capacities at Headquarters and in the field, and drawing on lessons learned, including in terms of efficiency, accountability and results. They should be reviewed as circumstances evolve. Such clarity will also enable donors to direct their support, on the advice of United Nations leaders in the field, to the appropriate implementing entity, avoiding overlap and helping to fill gaps by directing investment to underfunded areas.

56. I have asked the Chair of the Steering Committee, whose members represent entities from across the United Nations system, to make such an approach a priority for the work of the Committee over the coming months, beginning with a review of the areas identified by the Senior Advisory Group as having critical capacity gaps and drawing on the focal points proposed by the Group:

(a) In the area of basic safety and security: disarmament and demobilization, police and security sector reform and governance;

(b) In the area of justice: corrections, criminal justice and judicial and legal reform;

(c) In the area of inclusive political processes: political party development and public information;

(d) In the area of core government functionality: aid policy and coordination, legislative branch and public financial management;

(e) In the area of economic revitalization: employment generation, natural resource management and private sector development.

57. The Steering Committee should assess any critical gaps beyond those already identified by the Senior Advisory Group. I intend to assess progress after one year and report back to Member States.

V. Financial and operational agility

58. In volatile post-conflict situations, time is of the essence in efforts to build capacity, to avoid the risk of relapse and to deliver critical peace dividends. The need for operational and financial agility to adapt to changing circumstances is increasingly understood as essential for effective international support. The Senior Advisory Group rightly draws attention to three areas in which it considers the United Nations can make further improvements: the capacity of missions to redeploy resources as needs change; using the entity best equipped to implement mandated tasks, based on the principle of comparative advantage; and facilitating the flow and timeliness of resources.

59. Nimbleness is essential in the international response to the needs of post-conflict countries, and in particular to the ability of the United Nations to support the capacity of the State to deliver early progress in key areas such as security, justice and basic services. My Special Representatives have a responsibility and opportunity to facilitate this beyond the resources they manage as heads of mission, in helping to ensure the congruity, complementarity and sequencing of international support for State-building and peacebuilding.

60. Operational and financial agility is particularly important with respect to mission design and budget at start-up and immediately thereafter. The basic mission design and initial budget is prepared, as the Senior Advisory Group points out, in fluid circumstances when knowledge of local requirements and capacities is limited. In keeping with this, the initial mission plan should be understood as preliminary. It was to acknowledge the uncertainty that prevails in this early phase that I proposed for the initial year of peacekeeping operations a standardized funding model, which the General Assembly has approved.[19] I intend to refine the model further to provide explicitly for subsequent changes by my Special Representatives in the mix of civilian capacity, so as to take advantage of nascent national capacity or to access expertise not readily sourced from within the United Nations.

61. The need to adapt to changing needs and circumstances continues throughout the life of a mission. Assessed budgets for field missions are planned 10 to 11 months before the start of the financial year and set out detailed information on all the envisaged inputs 10 to 24 months into the future. In reality, requirements change, especially in the early period after conflict. My Special Representatives need the ability to make some changes accordingly, including the ability to use the resources associated with vacant posts and positions, if necessary, to meet emerging priorities. A variety of practices are used by Governments and international organizations in addressing such contingencies, such as enhanced delegation to the field linked to risk management and accountability. While the United Nations has already taken similar measures, there may be more to be learned from assessing the applicability of those approaches to United Nations field missions.

62. Current funding arrangements provide some limited scope to adapt to changing circumstances. For example, the budget cycle for peacekeeping operations is annual, rather than biennial, and the appropriation structure reflects the understanding by the General Assembly of the need to enable the shifting of resources. Further, in line with the actions set out in "Renewing the United Nations: a Programme for Reform"

[19] See General Assembly resolution 65/289.

(A/51/950) concerning the delegation of maximum authority to line managers, administrative measures were taken within the Secretariat in 2002 to enhance the authority of peacekeeping operations in the management of resources within the three major categories of expenditure: military and police, civilian personnel and operational costs.

63. I intend to explore ways of further improving how we work within the current regulatory framework, while ensuring the necessary transparency and accountability for decisions made in the field. In order to ensure that senior managers are fully cognizant of the scope and procedures for adjustments during the implementation of an approved budget, we will ensure that training for senior leaders addresses this issue and that heads of field missions, programme managers and directors of mission support receive the same information.

64. I also intend to explore the possibility of making improvements in the presentation of information in proposed budgets for peacekeeping operations, so as to provide a more integrated and transparent display of the resources related to civilian capacity, which will be one of the three main categories of expenditure. Resources for civilian capacity would thereby be more clearly seen by the General Assembly and more readily deployed, or redeployed, as required by the mission.

65. The Senior Advisory Group also noted that mission design and budgets do not necessarily provide for implementation by those entities with a comparative advantage to perform the function. I shall issue appropriate guidance to heads of field missions and planners to apply the principle of comparative advantage in recommending how to go about discharging a mandate. The use of other United Nations actors, for example, to discharge mandated and budgeted functions for which they are well equipped, can offer practical advantages, including engagement with an entity often present in the country or area before a mission deploys and likely to be present after the mission leaves. Cooperative or joint planning, such as the development of an integrated strategic framework, should help to determine the comparative advantages of United Nations actors in the field. My priority will be to strengthen the ability of United Nations entities to plan, cooperate and work together in critical post-conflict situations.

66. The recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group also address the gaps in the timely availability of funding that delay the start of critical peacebuilding tasks. Pointing to the differences in funding streams that support implementation of the mandate and the perceived lack of flexibility in their use, the Senior Advisory Group makes a number of interrelated recommendations: that field missions be able to provide the necessary programmatic funds from assessed budgets when civilian capacities within missions have the comparative advantage to implement a mandated task; that voluntary contributions to support civilian capacities within missions be facilitated by reducing the overhead charged by mission trust funds; and that the agencies, funds and programmes that have not already done so consider measures to improve their rapid-response financing capacity.

67. Proposals for United Nations missions to carry out programmatic activities with assessed funding are not new; the joint United Nations community violence reduction programme supported by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in

Haiti, UNDP and others is one example.[20] In some cases, due to its presence and capacities, the mission can and should initiate an activity for a mandated function for which the voluntary funds are not available or have not yet been mobilized. Such measures should be assessed in the light of comparative advantage in that context and the work carried out by other actors, while respecting the fundamental competencies and mandates of United Nations entities. As always, the point of departure for the inclusion of a resource requirement in a proposed budget and its subsequent consideration by the General Assembly is the mandate.

68. With respect to encouraging voluntary contributions to peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict to complement work done by missions through assessed budgets, the Senior Advisory Group recommends that overheads charged by the Secretariat be aligned with the 7 per cent applied to multi-donor trust funds. The appeal of this idea can be readily understood from the standpoint of reducing competition among entities based purely on overhead rates. This is nonetheless a complex issue which needs to be examined from the standpoint of the Organization as a whole, in the context of cost recovery policies and arrangements for the United Nations. A central premise of long-standing policy is that core resources should not subsidize the activities of non-core resources.

69. An internal review of existing practices, which date from 1980, commenced in late 2010. This review is intended to contribute to an updated perspective of extrabudgetary funding in the financial architecture of the United Nations. It will clarify what costs are to be recovered and the means for doing so, and consider how the application of a cost-recovery policy can take account of partnerships and contributions in support of mandated tasks, in addition to contributions aimed at providing services for others. It will also examine the scope for aligning United Nations practices with those of other United Nations entities. This review is expected to be completed by the first quarter of 2012. I intend to keep the General Assembly informed of progress in this area.

70. The Senior Advisory Group also recommended that access for the agencies, funds and programmes to rapid-response financing should be improved, drawing on innovations at WFP and UNDP. I urge Member States to examine such mechanisms and to accelerate the availability of financing for recovery, transition and development for United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, so as to reduce financing gaps, especially in critical post-conflict settings.

VI. Conclusions and observations

71. **It is widely agreed that the international community and the United Nations in particular, can and must do better at providing rapid, effective civilian capacities to conflict-affected countries. Those States themselves are calling for change. In the context of the International Dialogue for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, the g7+ grouping[21] has proposed "a new deal to deliver international assistance to fragile States which generates results that**

[20] Other mandated areas that have dedicated programmatic funds are disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, public information, mine action and quick-impact projects.

[21] The g7+ is an open group of countries experiencing or emerging from conflict established in 2008 and comprising Afghanistan, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Liberia, Nepal, Solomon Islands, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Timor-Leste.

are aligned with peacebuilding and statebuilding objectives, is more transparent, flexible and effective, and strengthens (rather than duplicates) national and local capacities and institutions".[22]

72. **The Senior Advisory Group made valuable suggestions for how to do this. Their report covers a wide range of interconnected issues, all of which have a bearing on how we find and deploy civilian capacities. I have also listened closely to the views of Member States in the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council. I welcome the engagement of Member States and their support for a focus on national needs and priorities and for a demand-driven response to the recommendations in the report.**

73. **These challenges apply to more than just the United Nations, but since the United Nations leads or coordinates much international assistance in conflict-affected countries, we have a particular responsibility to take action. In the present report, I set out some early priorities for action. In taking them forward, I have asked the Chair of the Steering Committee to ensure that country-specific task forces, mission leadership and United Nations country teams are fully engaged. Their involvement will help to identify opportunities for testing ideas and approaches, particularly in countries with new missions or existing missions with new mandates (such as in Côte d'Ivoire or South Sudan), as well as in non-mission settings in the aftermath of conflict or crisis.**

74. **I consider it a priority to make progress in the areas within my own authority or that of the United Nations executive heads. However, this is a collective enterprise, which must involve Member States, the international financial institutions and the wider group of peacebuilding stakeholders — civil society, academia and the private sector. The approach therefore emphasizes the development of proposals in partnership with others. I am grateful for the supportive engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission. I shall rely on its continued involvement and that of the consultative group of Member States, particularly in the proposed dialogue with Member States to analyse the supply and demand for particular capacities. The expertise of those leaders who have grappled with civilian capacity challenges at Headquarters and in the field is of great value, and I shall continue to draw upon the experience of the Senior Advisory Group. Finally, efforts within the United Nations must take account of other initiatives, in particular through the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, the g7+ and the operationalization of the *World Development Report*.**

75. **The present report focuses on what the United Nations can do now, but also looks beyond to broader partnerships and ahead to future steps. I intend to report back to Member States in 2012 on progress and on further initiatives that may be needed, including any which may require decisions by the General Assembly. Meanwhile, I shall depend upon the support and cooperation of all our partners in working towards our common objectives.**

[22] See the Monrovia road map agreed at the second International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, 15-16 June 2011, available at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/24/48345560.pdf.